

Testimony of the

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Connecticut ENT Society

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Connecticut Urology Society

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Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians

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Connecticut Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery Society

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Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons

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H. B. No. 5258 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING SCOPE OF  
PRACTICE DETERMINATIONS FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS.

Before the **PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

On

February 25, 2010

Good Morning, Chairmen Harris, Ritter, Kissel, Mushinsky and other distinguished members of both the Program Review and Investigations and Public Health Committees, I am Dr. Milton Armm and I am a board certified urologist and president of the CT Urology Society here to represent over 1400 physicians in a variety of medical specialties with regard to HB 5258.

On behalf of these organizations I would like to thank you for addressing the process of scope of practice determinations and how these determinations ultimately affect the quality of health care for Connecticut residents. We understand that these decisions in the past have placed a significant burden on the legislature, its staff, and the Public Health Committee in particular, and we thank the PRI Committee for its thorough review of existing approaches to this thorny issue. I would refer you to our written testimony, which elaborates upon our thoughts here. Connecticut's citizens will be best served if all scope of practice issues are considered based on objective, well-documented criteria with the goal of patient welfare being paramount. The deliberative process needs to be transparent, impartial, and free of special interest or personal influence. We encourage the requirement of demonstrating a verifiable compelling need for a proposed scope of practice change. The presumption should be that scope should not change; the burden of proof should be on the petitioner. We would also encourage further consideration of mediation, as that has worked well in the past.

We believe the bill can be strengthened further by the adoption of a few additional requirements for obtaining scope changes. Education purported to support the claim for expansion should be explicitly detailed, including, for example, the actual time spent, and the type of teaching: lecture, video, actual performance of a procedure. To the extent that different practitioners may begin to overlap in their allowed activities, patients may become confused about who is providing their care, and may wish to exercise control over what practitioners they see. It should be required that practitioners fully identify themselves by degree and qualification when presenting themselves to patients prior to providing health care services.

The exclusionary language for the at-large professional and public members, that they have no "personal or professional interest" in the proposed change, should not be interpreted too

broadly. For instance, it would not be necessary or appropriate to exclude a general internist from a committee hearing a scope dispute between podiatry and orthopedics, solely because he or she held an MD or DO degree. We would like explicit language to that effect included in the bill, or at least in the statement of legislative intent.

We would also encourage the inclusion of a representative from the two medical schools in the state on the panels, as they would provide insight regarding current medical education.

We hope you will incorporate these improvements into your final recommendations. Thank you for addressing this difficult issue in such a thoughtful manner. The physicians and surgeons of Connecticut stand ready to help you forge an effective and fair process that protects the health and welfare of our state residents.